

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 00889 01 OF 03 180453Z
ACTION H-03

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P R 180403Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 477
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SECDEF WASHDC
CINCPAC
CINCPACREPPHIL
13TH AF

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 MANILA 0889

DEPARTMENT (H) PLEASE PASS TO CODEL STRATTON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (STRATTON, SAMUEL S.)
SUBJECT: CODEL STRATTON'S VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES

1. SUMMARY: CODEL STRATTON'S VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES JANUARY 12-14 AFFORDED THE CODEL AN OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW US MILITARY FACILITIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO A POTENTIAL CONFLICT IN KOREA, AND TO DISCUSS WITH PHILIPPINE LEADERS THE US TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM KOREA. THE CODEL ENTERED THE PHILIPPINES AT CLARK AIR FORCE BASE AND RECEIVED BASE BRIEFINGS AND FACILITY TOURS AT BOTH CLARK AND SUBIC NAVAL BASE. AT CLARK THE CODEL WAS INTERESTED SPECIFICALLY IN THE 13TH AIR FORCE'S ABILITY TO AIRLIFT TROOPS AND MATERIAL TO KOREA IN THE EVENT OF HOSTILITIES ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. IN MANILA THE CODEL WAS BRIEFED BY THE AMBASSADOR AND COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS AND MET WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS, SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROMULO AND SECRETARY FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE ENRILE. PRESIDENT MARCOS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 00889 01 OF 03 180453Z

TOLD THE DELEGATION HE THOUGHT IT A WISE POLICY TO CONTINUE AN AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC. HE INDICATED HE THOUGHT THE TROOPS PROVIDED A STRONG "PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIER" AGAINST AGGRESSION. HE OPINED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL MIGHT NOT ONLY INCREASE THE RISKS OF OVERT AGGRESSION BUT ALSO INCREASE THE CHANCES OF GREATER NUMBERS OF INSURGENCIES. THIS IS THE CLEAREST INDICATION WE HAVE HAD TO DATE THAT MARCOS FEELS

SOME ANXIETY OVER THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM KOREA. CONGRESS-MAN STRATTON BREAKFASTED WITH MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE PHILIPPINES JANUARY 14 AT WHICH FUNCTION HE CHARACTERIZED AS POLITICAL MASOCHISM US CRITICISM OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORDS OF OUR ALLIES WHILE PAYING LESS ATTENTION TO THE SITUATIONS IN THE COUNTRIES OF OUR ADVERSARIES. END SUMMARY.

2. CODEL STRATTON (REPRESENTATIVES STRATTON, ROBERT DANIEL AND WON PAT, ACCOMPANIED BY THREE STAFF MEMBERS) ARRIVED IN THE PHILIPPINES AT CLARK AIR FORCE BASE JANUARY 12. THE CODEL WAS GIVEN STANDARD BASE BRIEFINGS AND FACILITY TOURS AT BOTH CLARK AND SUBIC NAVAL BASE BEFORE HELICOPTERING TO MANILA. DURING THE CLARK BRIEFING STRATTON EVINCED INTEREST PRIMARILY IN THE RELATION OF CLARK AIR FORCE BASE TO KOREA. THE CODEL REQUESTED DETAILS ON CLARK'S AIRLIFT CAPABILITIES TO KOREA AND APPEARED ESPECIALLY CONCERNED WITH PROCEDURES FOR TRANSPORTING TROOPS TO KOREA IN THE EVENT OF HOSTILITIES. THE EVENING OF THE 12TH THE AMBASSADOR HOSTED A COMBINED RECEPTION FOR CODELS STRATTON AND STONE.

3. JANUARY 13 THE CODEL FIRST VISITED IN MANILA THE PHILIPPINE CEMETARY OF HEROES, WHERE THEY RECEIVED HONORS AND LAID A WREATH, AND THE AMERICAN CEMETARY WHERE THEY ALSO LAID A WREATH. THE CODEL WAS THEN BRIEFED BY THE AMBASSADOR AND COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS ON THE STATE OF US-PHILIPPINE BILATERAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANILA 00889 01 OF 03 180453Z

RELATIONS. REPRESENTATIVE STRATTON ASKED ABOUT STATUS OF THE US-PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC TREATY AND OF THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THAT THE ECONOMIC NEGOTIATIONS ARE PROCEEDING SPORADICALLY AND THAT THERE ARE NO MAJOR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE US AND THE PHILIPPINES AT PRESENT; WAYS HAVE BEEN FOUND TO ADDRESS THOSE PROBLEMS THAT DO EXIST DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF A NEW TREATY. THE AMBASSADOR GAVE A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CURRENT DISCUSSIONS ON THE MILITARY BASES AND STRESSED THAT MARCOS DESIRES THAT PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE BASES BE CLEARLY MANIFESTED. HE NOTED THE FILIPINOS HAVE ALSO EXPRESSED DOUBTS REGARDING THE US' COMMITMENT TO CARRY OUT ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY. THEIR CONCERN CENTERED AROUND THE WAR POWERS

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 00889 02 OF 03 180600Z
ACTION H-03

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HQ DA/DAC-BUC
JCS WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
CINCPAC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 MANILA 0889

DEPARTMENT (H) PLEASE PASS TO CODEL STRATTON

WHICH THEY FELT MIGHT INHIBIT A RAPID US RESPONSE TO A THREAT DIRECTED AGAINST THEM. THEY NOW APPEAR SATISFIED, THE AMBASSADOR CONTINUED, FOLLOWING EXPLANATIONS THAT THE ACT DOES NOT PREVENT THE US FROM FULFILLING ITS TREATY OBLIGATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THE CURRENT BASES DISCUSSIONS HINGE ON SUCH AREAS AS THE RECOGNITION OF PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGNTY, ASSISTANCE TO THE ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED TOWNSHIPS ADJACENT TO THE BASES AND SOME HELP TO THE PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES IN DEVELOPING THEIR CAPABILITIES IN AREAS SUCH AS AIR DEFENSE. REPRESENTATIVE STRATTON ASKED IF THE US WAS NOT COMMITTED TO THE KISSINGER PROPOSAL OF \$1 BILLION IN COMPENSATION FOR THE BASES. THE AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERABLE CHANGES WITHIN THE US -- THE ADMINISTRATION AND IN CONGRESS -- AND UNDERSTANDS THAT WE CAN NO LONGER OFFER THAT FIGURE. REPRESENTATIVE STRATTON STRESSED THE NEED FOR CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE BASE ISSUE AND SUGGESTED CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 00889 02 OF 03 180600Z

THAT IF THE ADMINISTRATION FEELS THE BASES ARE IMPORTANT THEY MUST MAKE THIS KNOWN TO THE CONGRESS, INCLUDING THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE. STRATTON ASKED IF THERE IS AN EXTERNAL THREAT TO THE PHILIPPINES. THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT PERCEIVES A LONG-TERM THREAT FROM SUCH AREAS AS VIETNAM AND PERHAPS TAIWAN SHOULD IT BECOME PART OF THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

4. DURING THE VISIT TO MALACANANG THE CODEL SPOKE WITH SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROMULO WHILE WAITING TO SEE PRESIDENT MARCOS. ROMULO PRESENTED A BRIEF REVIEW OF CONDITIONS IN THE PRE-MARTIAL LAW PHILIPPINES, STRESSING THAT AMERICAN CRITICS ARE UNAWARE OF THE CONDITIONS WHICH PROVOKED THE DECLARATION OF MARTIAL LAW. CORRUPTION, VIOLENCE AND CHAOS APPROACHING ANARCHY EFFECTIVELY LIMITED PRE-MARTIAL LAW DEMOCRACY, HE CONTENDED. ROMULO STATED THE TERM "MARTIAL LAW" CONNOTES A SITUATION DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IS EXTANT IN THE PHILIPPINES. HE REMINED THE CODEL THE PROVISION FOR MARTIAL LAW DERIVES FROM THE PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION WHICH WAS APPROVED BY THE UNITED STATES. ROMULO REITERATED OFT HEARD CRITICISM OF THE US MEDIA FOR DISTORTING THE SITUATION IN THE PHILIPPINES AND OF USG FOR SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS REQUIREMENTS. HE ASKED WHY PRESIDENT CARTER DID NOT PUBLICLY MENTION HUMAN RIGHTS WHEN HE RECENTLY VISITED IRAN AND POLAND. REFERRING TO THE RECENT VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN, ROMULO STATED SHE LACKED SENSITIVITY AND CRITICIZED HER FOR "THREATENING" THE PHILIPPINES WITH AID SANCTIONS IF IT DOES NOT IMPROVE ITS HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD.

5. FOLLOWING ROMULO'S PRESENTATION, SECRETARY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE ENRILE JOINED THE GROUP AND BRIEFED THE CODEL ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN MINDANAO. ENRILE STATED THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANILA 00889 02 OF 03 180600Z

MINDANAO CONFLICT WAS A SERIOUS PROBLEM BUT THAT THE PHILIPPINES COULD HANDLE IT ALONE. THE GOP WAS NOT ATTEMPTING TO INVOLVE THE US EVEN THOUGH THE INSURGENCY WAS SUPPORTED FROM ABROAD, THOUGH IT DOES NEED TO PURCHASE ARMS FROM THE US. ONLY EIGHT PROVINCES ARE AFFECTED, HE CONTENDED: NORTH AND SOUTH COTABATO, LANAQ DEL SUR AND DEL NORTE, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR AND DEL NORTE, SULU AND BASILAN; THE WORST FIGHTING CONTINUES IN SULU. ENRILE STATED THAT SEVERAL MODERATE MID-EASTERN COUNTRIES HAVE SAID THE USSR MAY BE BEHIND THE MNLF.

6. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION REGARDING THE AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS FROM KOREA, MARCOS STATED THAT HE THOUGHT IT A "WISE" POLICY TO MAINTAIN AN AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC. HE STATED THAT IF THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL IS PERCEIVED AS A DIMINUTION OF AMERICAN POWER IT WILL ENSURE RISKS FOR ALL ASIAN COUNTRIES. HE SUGGESTED THAT US TROOPS PROVIDE A "STRONG PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIER" TO AGGRESSION; AGGRESSIVE NATIONS WILL THINK TWICE ABOUT ENGAGING THE US WHILE THEY WILL HAVE NO QUALEMS ABOUT FIGHTING OTHER ASIAN STATES, HE EXPLAINED. HE STATED HE WAS AWARE THAT THIS WAS AN IMPORTANT PROBLEM FOR THE US AND ASKED IF THERE WAS AN ECONOMIC REASON FOR THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL. CONGRESSMAN STRATTON REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NOT AN ECONOMIC QUESTION;

STATIONING THESE TROOPS IN THE US WOULD ACTUALLY BE MORE EXPENSIVE THAN PERMITTING THEM TO REMAIN IN KOREA. STRATTON REPORTED PRESIDENT PARK FELT THE WITHDRAWAL WAS A BAD IDEA,

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 00889 03 OF 03 180537Z
ACTION H-03

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CINCPAC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 MANILA 0889

DEPARTMENT (H) PLEASE PASS TO CODEL STRATTON

THAT IT ENTAILED THE LOSS OF A DETERRENT AND THAT PARK HAD ASKED WHY CHANGE A STABLE SITUATION. MARCOS OPINED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL WOULD NOT ONLY ENCOURAGE PREDATORY STATES, BUT ALSO RAISE THE RISKS OF INSURGENCIES.

7. STRATTON EXPLAINED THAT THE PLAN CALLED FOR THE REMOVAL OF 6,000 TROOPS THIS YEAR AND OF THE REMAINDER BY 1982. THE US WILL, HOWEVER, AUGMENT ITS AIR FORCES AND TURN OVER TO THE ROK THE EQUIPMENT OF THE WITHDRAWN SECOND DIVISION. STRATTON STATED THERE WAS A "GOOD DEAL OF APPREHENSION" IN THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE ABOUT THE WITHDRAWAL AND MANY IN CONGRESS QUESTIONED THE POLICY. STRATTON SUGGESTED IT MAY APPEAR THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE ASIA IS IMPORTANT SINCE WHILE WE ARE WITHDRAWING FROM KOREA WE ARE ALSO TALKING ABOUT BUILDING UP NATO. MARCOS OBSERVED THAT DEFENSE CANNOT BE LIMITED TO ONE SIDE OF THE WORLD WITHOUT WEAKENING THE WHOLE EFFORT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 00889 03 OF 03 180537Z

8. MOVING TO THE BASES, MARCOS SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE BASES HAVE A GREATER VALUE TO THE US THAN THE PHILIPPINES, THEY ALSO ARE IMPORTANT TO BOTH THE PHILIPPINES AND TO WORLD PEACE. THE GOP IS READY TO MAKE ITS "MODEST CONTRIBUTION" BY SUPPORTING THE BASES, PROVIDED PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGNTY IS RECOGNIZED AND THE PHILIPPINES CAN PREPARE FOR ANY (MILITARY) EVENTUALITY. MARCOS STATED THAT HE HAS BEEN GIVEN THE IMPRESSION BY THE SPATE OF RECENT VISITORS TO MANILA THAT CONGRESS WILL PLAY A LARGE ROLE IN ANY NEW TREATY. STRATTON STATED THIS WAS INDEED THE CASE AND THAT THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE WOULD SUPPORT THE RETENTION OF THE BASES. THE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS WAS FOLLOWED BY A LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE PRESIDENT WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROMULO, SECRETARY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE JUAN PONCE ENRILE, SECRETARY OF INFORMATION TATAD, SECRETARY OF LABOR OPLE, AND SECRETARY OF INDUSTRY PATERNO.

9. CONGRESSMAN STRATTON BREAKFASTED WITH TWELVE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE PHILIPPINES JANUARY 14. THE AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBLE REPEAL OF SECTION 911 OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, PREDICTING IT WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT US SALES OVERSEAS BY DISCOURAGING BUSINESSMEN FROM WORKING ABROAD. STRATTON CHARACTERIZED USG CRITICISMS OF OUR ALLIES' HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCES, WHILE PAYING LESS ATTENTION TO OUR ADVERSARIES', AS "POLITICAL MASOCHISM." STRATTON INDICATED THERE WAS SUBSTANTIAL SENTIMENT AGAINST THE WITHDRAWAL OF US TROOPS FROM KOREA. HE HYPOTHE-SIZED THAT ONCE OUR "SYMBOLIC FORCES" ARE WITHDRAWN, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT WE WOULD EVER COMMIT TROOPS AGAIN TO KOREA. HE INDICATED HE CONSIDERED THE PRESENCE OF US TROOPS NECESSARY TO PREVENT ANY MISCALCULATION ON THE PART OF A POTENTIAL ADVERSARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANILA 00889 03 OF 03 180537Z

10. CONGRESSMAN WON PAT LEFT MANILA JANUARY 13 AT 1100 HOURS AND DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING WITH MARCOS. CONGRESS-MAN DANIEL LEFT FOLLOWING THE MARCOS MEETING.

11. THE FOREGOING WAS DRAFTED FOLLOWING THE CODEL'S DEPARTURE AND HAS NOT BEEN CLEARED BY THE CODEL.
NEWSOM

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